

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-05 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 DRC-01 RSC-01

SSO-00 /025 W
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O 211215Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5762

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP (ABOUREZK, JAMES)

SUBJECT: CODEL SCHEDULE BEIRUT

REF: STATE 245513

1. FOLLOWING IS SUGGESTED TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR CODEL VISIT

BEIRUT, COORDINATED WITH CLOVIS MAKSOUD:

(A) THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27

1755 - ARRIVE BEIRUT VIA PA-002. EMBASSY CONTROL OFFICER
CAROLAN AND MR. MAKSOUD TO MEET CODEL AT PLANESDIE AND ESCORT
TO PHOENICIA HOTEL.

EVENING - PRIVATE DINNER FOR CODEL HOSTED BY MAKSOUD.

(B) FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28

MORNING - CALLS ON SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT AND AT FOREIGN
MINISTRY, PLUS BRIEFING ON AREA ENERGY MATTERS AT OFFICES OF MIDDLE
EAST ECONOMIC SURVEY.

AFTERNOON - WORKING LUNCHEON AT AMBASUADOR'S RESIDENCE, IFOLLOWED
BY MEETING WITH UNRWA DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GENERAL (AT LATTER'S
REQUEST).

EVENING - DINNER HOSTED BY KAMEL ASSAD, SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT.

(SEE PARA 2 BELOW.)

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(C) SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29

MORNING AND AFTERNOON - TRIP TO SOUTH LEBANON, ARRANGED
BY MAKSOUD.

EVENING - PRIVATE XINNER HOSTED BY SHAYKH KHALIL AL KHOURY,
GUESTS TO INCLUDE SEVERAL LEXANESE POLITICAL FIGURES KNOWN TO
SENATOR. (WE UNDERSTAND SUCH GOL CRITICS AS RAYMOND EDDIE, AN NAHAR
PUBLISHER GHASSAN TUEINI, AND OTHERS WILL BE PRESENT AT THIS OR
OTHER FUNCTIONS ARRANGED BY MAKSOUD.)

(C) SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

MORNING - VIUIT TO ANTIQUITY SITE AT BAALBEK, ACCCOMPANIED BY
MAKSOUAD.

AFTERNOON - LUNCH AT CHTOURA, AFTER WHICH CODEL TO PROCEED TO
DAMASCUS BY CAR.

2. FYI. (A) DUE TO STIFF COMPETITION FOR HONOR OF HOSTING EVENTS FOR
AND OF MEETING WITH SENATOR, AND TO PROBLEM INHERENT IN HAVING
MAKSOUAD ARRANGE PART OF PROGRAM, A CONFLICT HAS ACISEN FOR DINNER
EVENING OF DEC. 28. MAKSOUD HAD TOLD CONTROL OFFICER SEVERAL DAYS
AGO THAT LOCAL PUBLIC RELATIONS MAGNATE SAMIR SOUKI HAD OFFERED TO
HAVE DINCER FMR SENATOR ON DEC. 28. CONTROL OFFICER TOLF VAKSoud
WE HOPED THAT PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL ASSEVBLY AND NUMBER TWO MAN IN
GOL, KAMEL ASSAD, WOULD HOST DINNER AND THEREFORE WE WOULD
APPRECIATE MAKSOUD AND SOUKI HOLDING OFF ON DEFINITE COMMITMENT.
WHEN DEFINITE INVITATION FROM ASSAD ARRIVEDION DEC. 21, CONTROL
OFFICER DISCOVERED THAT UNBEKNOWNST TO US (AND ALSO UNBEKNOWNST
TO MAKSOUD, WHO IS QUITE UPSET) SOUKI HAD CONTACTED SENATOR BY
PHONE AND RECEIVED APPROVAL TO SEND OUT INVITATIONS FOR DINNER
EVENING OF DEC. 28.

(B) AS SENATOR'S SCHEDULE PRESENTLQ STANDS, HE WILL BE MEETING
WITH OR ENTERTAINED BY SEVERAL PROMINENT LEBANESE WHO FIGURE IN
EYES OF PRESENT REGIME AS OPPONENTS OR AT LEAST SEVERE CRITICS
(E.G., MAKSOUD HIMSELF; KHALIL KHOURY; AN NAHAR'S GHASSAN TUENI
AND OTHERS). WHILE SOUKI IS NOT IN THIS CATEGORY, NEITHER IS HE
SEEN AS SUPPORTER OF REGIME. MOREOVER, KAMEL ASSAD IS MAN WITH CON-
SIDERABLE SENSITIVITY TO WHAT APPEAR TO BE SLIGHTS TO HIS POSITION OR
PREROGATIVES. NON-ACCEPTANCE BY SENATOR OF INVITATION WHICH EMBASSY
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HAS SOLICITED WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY ANGER ASSAD AND BE SEEN AS
MAJOR DISCOURTESY, OR WOSE, BY ASSAD AND PROBABLY PRESIDENT FRANGIE.
THIS WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE SINCE IT COMES AT TIME OF LARGE-SCALE
INTERNAL UNREST AND OPPOSITION TO GOL (SEE SEPTEL) AND AT PERIOD WHEN
WE ARE ABOUT TO CHANGE AMBASSADORS. MOREOVER, GOL WOULD PROBABLY
HAVE DIFFICULTY IN DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE
BRANCH WHEN IT COMES TO SENATOR'S SCHEDULE.

(C) FOR ABOVE REASONS, WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND DEPT. URGENTLY
CONTACT SENATOR OR SOMEONE FROM HIS STAFF, EXPLAIN PROBLEM, AND
SUGGEST THAT SENATOR TELEPHONE OR CABLE SOUKI REGRETTING THAT
CONFUSION HERE HAS LED TO DUPLICJSION IN HIS SCHEDLUE AND STATING
HE FEELS OBLIGED TO ACCEPT ONE AND ONLY OFFICIAL INVITATION EXTEN-
DED, IN ABSENCE OF PRES. FRANGIE (BEIRUT 13986), BY NUMBER TWO
RANKING FIGURE IN GOL, KAMEL ASSAD. IF DEPT. THINKS IT NECESSARY,
SENATOR'S OFFICE COULD TELL SOUKI THAT RECOMMENDATION TO THIS
EFFECT HAS COME FROM EMBASSY BEIRUT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: elyme
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BEIRUT14513
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731211/aaaaaido.tel
Line Count: 125
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 245513
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03-Jan-2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <24-Jan-2002 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL SCHEDULE BEIRUT
TAGS: OREP, (ABOUREZK, JAMES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005